AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-12. (Canceled).

13. (Previously presented): A method of managing a free-space optical network, comprising the steps of:

directing network data traffic over one or more free-space optical links in the free-space optical network;

monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links; and

routing the network data traffic through a non-wireless alternate communication path in response to data obtained from the step of monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links;

wherein the step of monitoring one or more environmental conditions comprises the step of collecting data indicative of at least one of the one or more environmental conditions with an instrument located in the vicinity of the at least one of the one or more free-space optical links;

wherein the step of monitoring one or more environmental conditions further comprises the step of:

sending an alarm over the free-space optical network in response to the data indicative of at least one of the one or more environmental conditions.

14. (original): A method in accordance with claim 13, wherein the step of routing the network data traffic through an alternate communication path is performed in response to the alarm.

15-26. (Canceled).

27. (Previously presented): A method of managing a free-space optical network, comprising the steps of:

directing network data traffic over one or more free-space optical links in the free-space optical network;

monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links;

sending an alarm over the free-space optical network in response to data obtained from the step of monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links;

routing the network data traffic through a non-wireless alternate communication path in response to the alarm; and

rerouting the network data traffic over the one or more free-space optical links in the free-space optical network in response to additional data obtained from monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links.

28. (original): A system in accordance with claim 27, wherein the alternate communication path comprises more than one mode of communication.

29. (Previously presented): A method of managing a free-space optical network, comprising the steps of:

directing network data traffic over one or more free-space optical links in the free-space optical network;

monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links;

sending an alarm over the free-space optical network in response to data obtained from the step of monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links;

selecting an alternate communication path for the network data traffic in response to the alarm;

routing the network data traffic through the alternate communication path;

re-evaluating the alternate communication path selection; and

rerouting the network data traffic over the one or more free-space optical links in the free-space optical network in response to additional data obtained from monitoring one or more environmental conditions in a vicinity of at least one of the one or more free-space optical links.

30. (original): A system in accordance with claim 29, wherein the alternate communication path comprises more than one mode of communication.

31-33. (Canceled).

34. (Previously presented): A method in accordance with claim 27, wherein the step of routing the network data traffic through an alternate communication path further comprises the step of:

selecting the alternate communication path.

35-36. (Canceled).